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(54) **ANDROGENIC STEROID COMPOUNDS AND A METHOD OF MAKING AND USING THE SAME**

(75) Inventors: **C. Edgar Cook**, Staunton, VA (US);
John A. Kepler, Raleigh, NC (US);
Yue-Wei Lee, Chapel Hill, NC (US);
Mansukh C. Wani, Durham, NC (US)

(73) Assignee: **Research Triangle Institute**, Research Triangle Park, NC (US)

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C07J 41/00

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552/646; 552/650

(58) Field of Search 514/182, 179;
552/520, 646, 650

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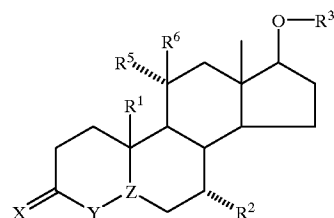
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Primary Examiner—Barbara P. Badio

(74) Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Oblon, Spivak, McClelland, Maier & Neustadt, P.C.

(57) **ABSTRACT**

An androgenic steroid compound of the formula:



wherein:

X Y, Z, R¹, R², R³, R⁵ and R⁶ are as defined herein.

26 Claims, No Drawings

ANDROGENIC STEROID COMPOUNDS AND A METHOD OF MAKING AND USING THE SAME

This application is a division of application Ser. No. 08/979,369 filed on Nov. 26, 1997, now U.S. Pat. No. 5,952,319.

The work leading up to the present invention was supported, at least in part, by NICHD, Contract No. N01-HD-6-2814, 1978; and NICHD, Contract No. N01-HD-7-2818, 1977-1979; and as such, the U.S. Government may have certain rights in the present invention.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to androgenic steroid compounds and a method of making and using the same.

2. Discussion of the Background

Testosterone is the principal male hormone and is required for the development and maintenance of secondary sexual characteristics, libido and spermatogenesis. Testosterone also has anabolic properties, in promoting in muscle growth and maintenance. Lower than normal testosterone levels in men have been associated with low energy, frailty, depression, decreased libido, weakness, lethargy, loss of lean body and bone mass and impotence. A second androgen, dihydrotestosterone (DHT), is produced from testosterone. DHT is a potent androgen. It is believed to be responsible for prostate growth and inhibitors of the enzyme that forms it have been used to treat prostatic hypertrophy and benign prostate hyperplasia.

Testosterone is rapidly metabolized in the body. Since the liver metabolizes most orally administered testosterone before it reaches the systemic blood circulation, large oral doses are necessary in order to have the desired effect. To some extent, this difficulty may be overcome by using the drug in the form of a fatty acid ester and administering the same by intramuscular injection, nevertheless, doses of 200 mg must still be given at weekly or bi-weekly intervals. Although testosterone can be administered by skin patch, large patches must be used due to low activity and rapid metabolism. Recently, a permeation-enhanced back patch was reported, however, this still requires the use of two large, i.e. 37 cm² patches for a total area of 11.5 in² or about 30% more area than an ordinary playing card.

Hence, a need exists for an androgenic compound that has enhanced potency relative to testosterone, which would permit more facile procedures for administration, such as the use of smaller skin patches, implantable devices or even oral or buccal administration.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

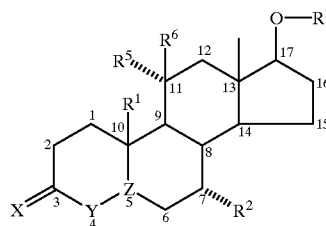
In accordance with the present invention, androgenic steroid compounds are provided which exhibit enhanced activity relative to testosterone.

The present invention also provides a method of making the androgenic steroid compounds.

The present invention also provides a therapeutic method for the administration of the present androgenic steroid compounds and compositions containing the same.

Accordingly, the above objectives and others are provided by an androgenic steroid compound having the ring numbering system and the formula (I):

(I)



wherein

R¹ is H or lower alkyl;

Y—Z is CH=C or CH₂—CH, wherein H is a to the rings, or Y—CH, wherein H is a to the rings and Y is S, O, or NR¹⁰, wherein R¹⁰ is H or lower alkyl;

R² is an α-substituent which is unsubstituted lower alkyl or fluoro-substituted lower alkyl;

R³ is C₁—C₈ alkyl, or C₈—C₂ alkenyl or alkynyl, which are optionally substituted; or R³ is C₄—C₈ cycloalkyl which is unsubstituted or substituted; or R³ is C₆—C₁₈ aryl which is unsubstituted or substituted; or R³ is a 5- to 15-membered heterocycle which is unsubstituted or substituted, and further wherein any of the above may be substituted with 1 to 3 heteroatoms or 1 to 5 halogen atoms or both; or

R³ is H or an acyl group (CO)—R⁴, wherein R⁴ is C₁—C₁₈ alkyl, or C₂—C₁₈ alkenyl or alkynyl which are optionally substituted; or R⁴ is C₄—C₁₈ cycloalkyl or substituted cycloalkyl; or R⁴ is C₆—C₁₈ aryl or substituted aryl; or R⁴ is a 5- to 15-membered heterocycle or substituted heterocycle, and wherein R⁴ may be optionally substituted with 1 to 3 heteroatoms or 1 to 5 halogen atoms or both;

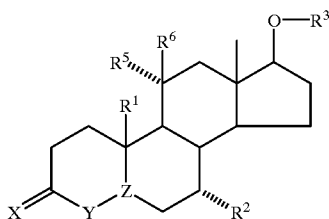
R⁵ is α-H and R⁶ is β-lower alkyl, alkenyl or alkynyl which are optionally substituted; or R⁵R⁶ is =CH₂; and

X is O, H₂, (H, OH) or (H₁, OCOR⁴), wherein R⁴ is as defined above; or X is (H, OR³), wherein R³ is as defined above; or X is NOR⁷, wherein R⁷ is H or C₁—C₈ alkyl, or C₂—C₈ alkenyl or alkynyl which are optionally substituted; or R⁷ is C₄—C₈ cycloalkyl or substituted cycloalkyl; or R⁷ is C₆—C₁₈ aryl or substituted aryl; or R⁷ is a 5- to 15-membered heterocycle or substituted heterocycle, and R⁷ may be optionally substituted with 1 to 3 heteroatoms or 1 to 5 halogen atoms or both; or X is (OR⁸, OR⁹), where R⁸ and R⁹ are lower alkyl or (OR⁸, OR⁹) is a cyclic structure containing 2 to 3 carbon atoms, optionally substituted with lower alkyl, or 1 or 2 heteroatoms or halogens.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

In accordance with the present invention, certain androgenic steroid compounds are provided which exhibit surprisingly enhanced activity relative to testosterone. Due to the enhanced potency of the present compounds, their administration is quite facile. For example, by virtue of the present invention, it is now possible to significantly reduce the size of skin patches required for skin administration. This also provides greater flexibility in the design of the patches. Moreover, the compounds of the present invention exhibit long-lasting effects after injection.

Generally, the present invention provides androgenic steroid compounds of the formula (I):



wherein:

R^1 is H or lower alkyl;

$Y-Z$ is $CH=C$ or CH_2-CH , wherein H is α to the rings; or $Y-CH$ wherein H is α to the rings and Y is S, O, or NR^{10} , wherein R^{10} is H or lower alkyl;

R^2 is an α -substituent which is unsubstituted lower alkyl or fluoro-substituted lower alkyl;

R^3 is C_1-C_8 alkyl, or C_2-C_8 alkenyl or alkynyl which are optionally substituted; or R^3 is C_4-C_8 cycloalkyl which is unsubstituted or substituted; or R^3 is C_6-C_{18} aryl which is unsubstituted or substituted; or R^3 is a 5- to 15-membered heterocycle which is unsubstituted or substituted, and further wherein any of the above may be further substituted with 1 to 3 heteroatoms or 1 to 5 halogen atoms or both; or

R^3 is H or an acyl group $(CO)-R^4$, wherein R^4 is C_1-C_{18} alkyl, or C_2-C_{18} alkenyl or alkynyl which are optionally substituted; or R^4 is C_4-C_{18} cycloalkyl or substituted cycloalkyl; or

R^4 is C_6-C_{18} aryl or substituted aryl; or R^4 is a 5- to 15-membered heterocycle or substituted heterocycle, and wherein R^4 may be optionally substituted with 1 to 3 heteroatoms or 1 to 5 halogen atoms or both;

R^5 is α -H, and R^6 is β -lower alkyl, alkenyl or alkynyl which are optionally substituted; or R^5R^6 is $=CH_2$; and

X is O, H_2 , (H, OH) or (H, $OCOR^4$), wherein R^4 is as defined above, or X is (H, OR^3), wherein R^3 is as defined above; or X is NOR^7 , wherein R^7 is H or C_1-C_8 alkyl or C_2-C_8 alkenyl or alkynyl, optionally substituted; or R^7 is C_4-C_8 cycloalkyl which is unsubstituted or substituted; or R^7 is C_6-C_{18} aryl or substituted aryl; or R^7 is a 5- to 15-membered heterocycle which is unsubstituted or substituted, and R^7 may be optionally substituted with 1 to 3 heteroatoms or 1 to 5 halogen atoms or both; or X is (OR^8, OR^9) , where R^8 and R^9 are lower alkyl, or (OR^8, OR^9) is a cyclic structure containing 2 to 3 carbon atoms, optionally substituted with lower alkyl, or 1 to 2 heteroatoms or halogen atoms or both.

In the above formula, it is preferred that R^1 is H, R^2 is CH_3 , R^3 is H, or is an acyl group of the formula $R^4(CO)$, wherein R^4 is CH_3 , C_2H_5 , $n-C_6H_{13}$, $(CH_3)_2CH$, cyclopentyl- CH_2-C_2 , trans-(4-n-butyl)cyclohexyl, $n-C_9H_{19}$, $(CH_3)_2(CO)(CH_2)_5CH_3$, phenyl- CH_2 or 3-pyridyl, or R^3 is CH_3 , C_2H_5 , CH_2OCH_3 , $Si(CH_3)_3$, $CCl_3-CH(OH)$, or 2-tetrahydropyranyl; R^5 is α -H and R^6 is β - CH_3 or R^5R^6 is $=CH_2$; and X is O, NOH or $NOCH_3$.

More preferably, compounds, such as $7\alpha,11\beta$ -dimethyl-17 β -hydroxyestr-4-en-3-one, 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -methyl-11-methyleneestr-4-en-3-one, 7 $\alpha,11\beta$ -dimethyl-17 β -heptanoyl-oxyestr-4-en-3-one, 7 $\alpha,11\beta$ -dimethyl-17 β -[(2-cyclopentylethyl)carbonyl]oxyestr-4-en-3-one, 7 $\alpha,11\beta$ -diethyl-17 β -(phenacetyloxy)estr-4-en-3-one, 7 α , 11 β -

dimethyl-17 β -[(trans-4-(n-butyl)cyclohexyl)carbonyl]oxyestr-4-en-3-one, and 7 $\alpha,11\beta$ -dimethyl-17 β -hydroxy-5 α -estr-3-one may be mentioned.

As used herein, the terms "lower alkyl" and "lower alkoxy" mean from 1 to 8 carbons, preferably from 1 to 4 carbons and specifically methyl, ethyl, propyl, isopropyl, n-butyl, sec-butyl or tert-butyl. The term "cycloalkyl" means a cyclic structure which may have one or more ring fused or unfused, each ring containing 4 to 12 carbon atoms, and optionally containing double bond unsaturation. For example, single rings may include from 4 to 12 carbons, such as cyclobutyl, cyclopentyl, cyclohexyl, cycloheptyl, cyclooctyl, cyclononyl, cyclodecyl, cycloundecyl, or dodecyl.

The term "heteroatom" means oxygen, nitrogen, sulfur or silicon atoms.

Further, where used the term "substituted" generally means substituted with lower alkyl or alkoxy as defined herein, and preferably with 1 to 4 carbons, or with halogen, such as fluoro or with both.

As used herein, the terms "lower alkenyl" and "lower alkynyl" mean, in general, those groups with 2 to 8, preferably 1 to 4, carbons. Examples of "lower alkenyl" are vinyl, propenyl, butenyl, pentenyl, hexenyl, heptenyl or octenyl. Examples of "lower alkynyl" are ethynyl, propynyl, butynyl, pentynyl, hexynyl, heptynyl or octynyl.

Additionally, as used herein, "heterocycle" means any heterocyclic ring system containing 1 to 3 heteroatoms, such as pyrazine, pyrimidine, pyridazine, imidazole, isoxazoline, pyrazole, pyrazolidine or thiazoline. By 5- to 15-membered is meant that the total number of structural core atoms in the ring system is 5- to 15. This includes carbon atoms and the heteroatoms in the ring system, and substituents, and not, of course, hydrogen. Furthermore, the ring system may consist of a single ring, as exemplified above, or may consist of fused ring systems, such as, for example, quinoline, or multiple unfused rings, such as, for example, 2-phenylpyridine.

As may be seen from the formula above, the androgenic steroid compounds of the present invention generally contain a 7 α -group in conjunction with an 11 β -methyl group or an 11-methylene group. Generally, moieties R^1 and $-OR^3$ of formula (I) are each in the β -orientation.

Further, the present compounds are generally characterized by a 17 β -hydroxy, ether or ester group. Generally, the 17 β -ester or ether compounds may be considered to be pro-drugs of the 17 β -hydroxy compounds. The former are presumably metabolized or hydrolyzed in vivo to form the latter.

Moreover, the present compounds are further generally characterized by a 3-keto, -oxime or -methoxime group.

Generally, R^2 is lower alkyl or lower alkyl substituted by fluorine.

R^3 is H or an acyl group $(CO)-R^4$, wherein R^4 is C_1-C_{18} alkyl, or C_2-C_{18} alkenyl or alkynyl which are optionally substituted; or R^4 is C_4-C_{18} cycloalkyl or substituted cycloalkyl; or R^4 is C_6-C_{18} aryl or substituted aryl; or R^4 is a 5- to 15-membered heterocycle or substituted heterocycle, and wherein each of the above may be optionally substituted with 1 to 3 heteroatoms or 1 to 5 halogen atoms or both; or

R^6 is lower alkyl lower alkenyl or lower alkynyl.

X is O, H_2 , (H, OH) or (H, $OCOR^4$), wherein R^4 is as defined above; or X is (H, OR^3), wherein R^3 is as defined above; or X is NOR^7 , wherein R^7 is H or C_1-C_8 alkyl, or C_2-C_{18} alkenyl or alkynyl which are optionally substituted; or R^7 is C_4-C_8 cycloalkyl or substituted cycloalkyl; or R^7 is C_6-C_{18} aryl or substituted aryl; or R^7 is a 5- to 15-membered

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heterocycle or substituted heterocycle, and R^7 may be optionally substituted with 1 to 3 heteroatoms or 1 to 5 halogen atoms or both; or X is (OR^8, OR^9) wherein R^8 and R^9 are lower alkyl, or (OR^8, OR^9) is a cyclic structure containing 2 to 3 carbon atoms, optionally substituted with lower alkyl groups, or 1 or 2 heteroatoms or halogens.

For example, (OR^8, OR^9) may be a cyclic group to form, with the C-3 carbon atom, a ketal, such as from ethylene glycol or 2,2-dimethyl propane-1,3-diol.

Examples of R^3 being $(CO)-R^4$, when R^4 is C_1-C_{18} alkyl, or C_2-C_{18} alkenyl or alkynyl which are optionally substituted and which may be $(CO)-CH_3$, $(CO)-C_2H_5$, $(CO)-C_3H_7$, $(CO)-C_4H_9$, $(CO)-C_5H_{11}$, $(CO)-C_6H_{13}$ or $(CO)-C_7H_{15}$, $(CO)-C_3H_{17}$, for alkyl, for example; $(CO)-CH_2-CH=CH_2$, $(CO)-CH=CH-CH_3$, $(CO)-CH_2-CH=CH-CH_3$, $(CO)-CH=CH-CH_2-CH_3$, $(CO)-CH_2-CH_2-CH=CH-CH_3$, $(CO)-CH=CH-(CH_2)_2-CH_3$ or $(CO)-CH=CH-(CH_2)_3-CH_3$ for alkenyl, for example; and $(CO)-C\equiv C-CH_3$, $(CO)-CH_2-C\equiv C-CH_3$, $(CO)-CH_2-CH_2-CH_2-C\equiv C-CH_3$, for alkynyl, for example.

Generally, substituted cycloalkyl, consistent with the above definition of "substituted" is cycloalkyl substituted by lower alkyl, lower alkoxy or halogen, preferably fluoro.

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Moreover, as used herein "aryl" means carbocyclic aromatic groups, such as phenyl or naphthyl, for example, having up to 18 carbons.

Synthesis of the Androgenic Steroid Compounds

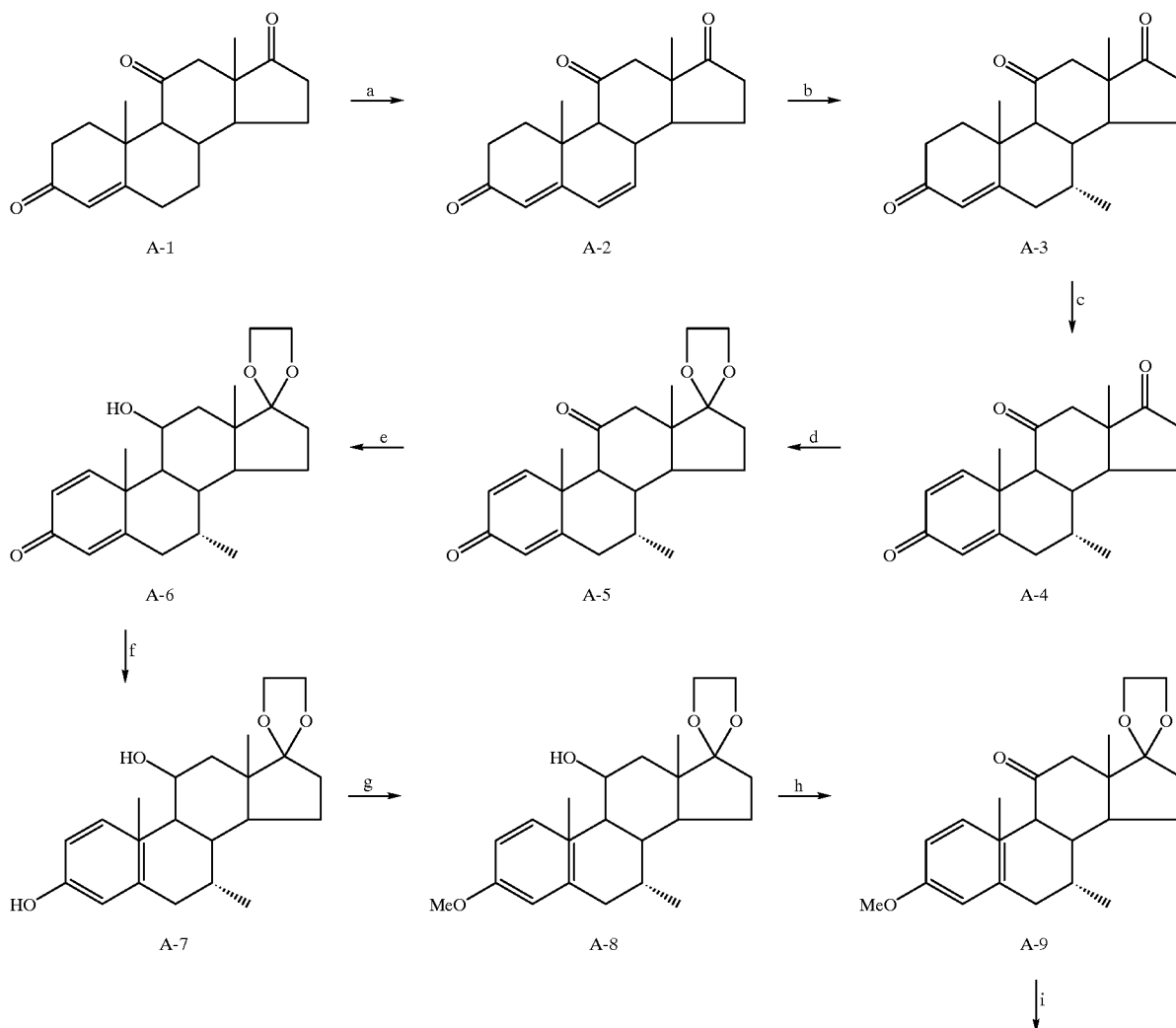
The androgenic steroid compounds of the present invention may be prepared using known reagents and reactions.

The following preparatory scheme is exemplary and provided for purposes of illustration and is not intended to be limitative.

EXAMPLE 1

By way of example, $7\alpha,11\beta$ -dimethyl- 17β -hydroxyestr-4-ene-3-one may be synthesized from the known compound adrenosterone (androst-4-ene-3,11,17-trione) by the following steps, which are described below the reaction schematic. Perhaps, the most important and generally applicable feature of the synthetic process of the present invention is the introduction of the 7α -substituent (R^2 in formula (I)) prior to the introduction of the 11-substituent (R^5 and/or R^6 in formula (I)).

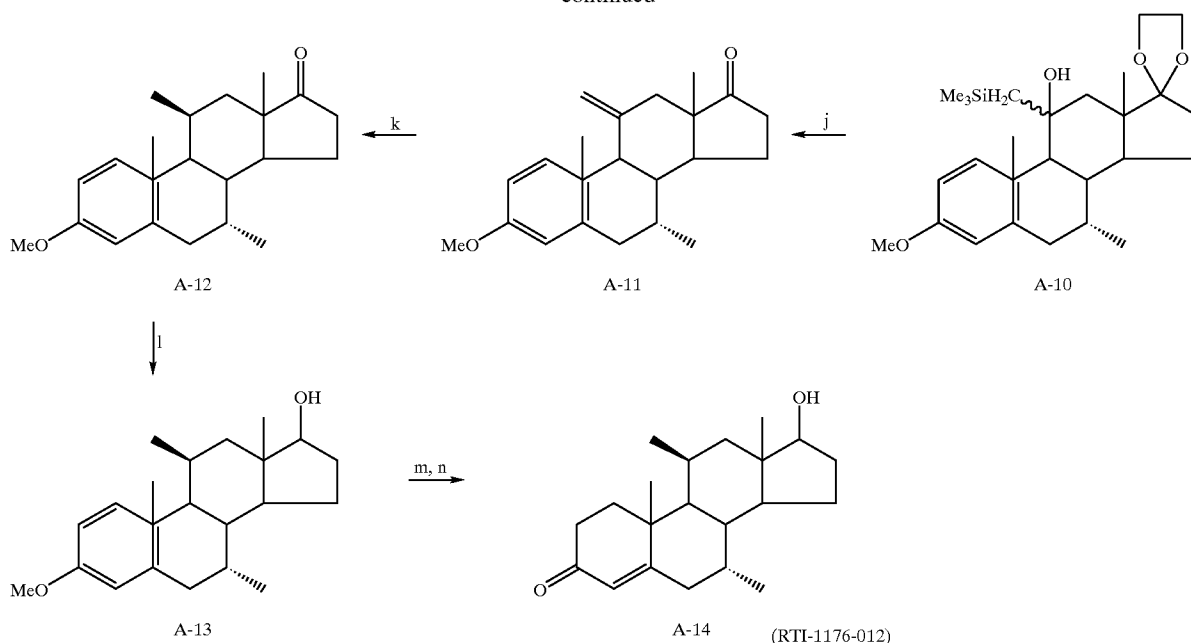
Chart A



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-continued



a: DDQ/HCl/Dioxane; b: Me_2CuLi , H^+ ; c: DDQ/dioxane; d: ethylene glycol/TsOH; e: $\text{LiAl}(\text{OtBu})_3\text{H}$; f: $\text{Li}/\text{Ph}_2\text{CH}_2/\text{THF}$; g: $\text{MeL}/\text{K}_2\text{CO}_3$;
 h: $\text{C}_6\text{H}_5\text{N}^+\text{CrO}_3^-\text{HCl}$; i: $\text{Me}_3\text{SiCH}_2\text{MgCl}$; j: H^+ ; k: $\text{H}_2/\text{Rh}/\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3(5\%)$; l: NaBH_4 ; m: Li/NH_3 ; n: H^+

- a) introduction of a 6,7-double bond;
 b) 1,6-addition of a methyl group by reaction with an organometallic reagent, followed by acid treatment;
 c) introduction of a 1,2-double bond;
 d) protection of the 17-ketone;
 e) reduction of the 11-ketone to an 11-hydroxy group;
 f) aromatization of the A-ring to a phenol;
 g) alkylation of the phenyl to an alkoxy arene compound;
 h) oxidization of the 11-hydroxyl to an 11-ketone;
 i) conversion of the 11-ketone to 11-trimethylsilylmethyl-n-alcohol;
 j) conversion to the 11-methylene and removal of the protecting group at C-17 to yield the 17-ketone;
 k) reduction of the 11-methylene to 11β-methyl;
 l) reduction of the 17-ketone to 17β-hydroxyl;
 m) conversion of the 3-alkoxy arene to a 4-en-3-one system.

The reagents generally required to effect the above transformations may be described using the same alphabetical system;

- a) effected by use of an electronegatively-substituted quinone;
 b) effected by using a methyl lithium copper complex;
 c) carried out using an electronegatively substituted quinone;
 d) forming the ketal by acid-catalyzed reaction with a 1,2 or 1,3-diol;
 e) carried out by using a complex metal hydride reagent;
 f) carried out using a metal/arene mixture;
 g) using an alkyl halide or activated alkylester, such as a sulfonate ester in the presence of a base;
 h) carried out by using a chromium oxidant;
 i) carried out by using a trialkyl silylmethyl organometallic reagent,

- j) carried out by treatment with an acid;
 k) carried out by using a metal-catalyzed hydrogenation;
 l) carried out by using a complex metal hydride reagent; and
 m) carried out by using a dissolving metal in an amine solvent, followed by treatment with an acid.

The above exemplary reaction will now be more specifically described below.

More specifically, the quinone of step a) is 2,3-dichloro-5,6-dicyanoquinone in the presence of anhydrous HCl and dioxane solvent;

the methyl lithium copper complex of step b) is formed from methyl lithium and the dimethyl sulphide complex of cuprous bromide;

the quinone of step c) is 2,3-dichloro-5,6-dicyanoquinone;

the diol of step d) is ethylene glycol and the acid is p-toluene sulphonic acid;

the complex metal hydride reagent of step e) is lithium tri(t-butoxy)aluminum hydride;

the metal/arene mixture of step f) is lithium/biphenyl/diphenylmethane;

the alkyl halide of step g) is methyl iodide and the base is potassium carbonate and the solvent is methanol;

the oxidant of step h) is pyridinium chromate;

the organometallic of step i) is trimethylsilylmethyl magnesium chloride;

the acid of step j) is hydrochloric acid;

the hydrogenation of step k) is carried out with hydrogen in the presence of rhodium on aluminum oxide as a catalyst;

the reduction of step l) is carried out with sodium borohydride;

the dissolving metal of step m) is lithium, the solvent is ammonia and the acid is hydrochloric acid.

Of course, the 17 β -ester or ether compounds may be made using known esterification or etherification reactions, whereas the 3-oxime or -methoxime compounds may be prepared from the 3-keto compound using conventional reactions for the formation of oximes and methoximes.

As noted, the above reaction sequence uses known reagents and reaction steps. However, the reaction sequence of the present invention affords the present androgenic steroid compounds in high yield with excellent stereoselectivity. Of particular importance is the introduction of the 7 α -group, such as methyl, prior to introduction of the 11 β -group, such as methyl.

Conjugate methylation of 17 β -acetoxy-11 β -methylene-4,6-dien-3-one with MeI/CuBr/Me₂S gave a 7 α -methyl: 7 β -methyl ratio of ca. 1:1, in contrast to the essentially complete 7 α -methylation found in the absence of the 11 β -methyl group. Thus, contrary to expectations based on potential steric hindrance of the β -side addition by the 11 β -methyl, the 11 β -methyl group enhanced 7 β -methyl addition under these conditions. However, when the approach used for the method described here is followed, the 7 α -methyl substituent is introduced with high stereoselectivity and later the 11 β -methyl substituent is also introduced with high stereoselectivity.

For a general overview of steroid synthesis see *Organic Chemistry of Drug Synthesis*, Chapter 10 "Steroids" by D. Lednicher and L. A. Mitscher (Highly-Interscience 1977) and *Encyclopedia of Chemistry Technology*, Vol. 22 "Steroids," pp 851-921 (Wiley-Interscience, 1997).

The Use of the Androgenic Steroid Compounds

The naturally occurring androgenic hormones are required for the development and maintenance of secondary sexual characteristics, libido and spermatogenesis. They also have anabolic properties, in promoting muscle growth and maintenance. Lower than normal levels of these hormones may occur as a result of aging or of other conditions. Hormone replacement therapy is then necessary to maintain energy, libido and lean body and bone mass at normal levels. The androgenic compounds of the present invention may be used in such therapy. Other conditions or treatments may also require the use of androgenic compounds. For example, one approach to male contraception entails the use of testosterone or esters thereof to suppress gonadotrophin production, thereby achieving azoospermia or oligospermia. Perhaps more practical in achieving azoospermia is the use of testosterone in combination with progestins, where the testosterone both contributes to the contraceptive effect and also replaces the otherwise suppressed endogenous androgens. Administration of agonists or preferably antagonists of gonadotrophin releasing hormone results in decreased sperm production, but also suppresses testosterone production. Thus, testosterone or other androgen must be given to make up the deficit. Antiestrogens also cause infertility in male animals. Their use may or may not require added androgen. Thus, androgens are useful in control of reproduction in the male, either alone or in conjunction with other agents such as those mentioned or other compounds. The androgenic steroids of the present invention may be used wherever a physical condition necessitates addition to or supplementation of endogenous androgenic hormones. Due to the enhanced potency of the present compounds as compared to testosterone, however, the former can be administered in much lower doses than the latter, which makes the administration of the present compounds much easier.

The androgenic steroid compounds of the present invention may be administered in any conventional manner, such as oral, buccal, intramuscular, subdermal implant, skin patch

or even inhalation. These compounds may be administered by themselves or in combination with other active or inert ingredients as a composition.

When used as a composition, the androgenic steroid compounds of the present invention may be formulated in any conventional manner known to those skilled in the art for steroid compositions.

For example, the androgenic steroid compounds may be formulated as described in U.S. Pat. Nos. 3,828,106; 3,767,685; 3,658,789; and 3,441,559; all of which are incorporated herein in the entirety.

Accordingly, the present invention also provides compositions containing the present androgenic steroid compounds. Other therapeutic or reproductively active agents, such as progestins, analogs of gonadotrophin releasing hormone, antiestrogens or other anabolic steroids may be included in these compositions or may be administered in conjunction with the present androgenic steroid compounds. Examples of progestins are levonorgestrel, cyproterone acetate (also an antiandrogen) and medroxyprogesterone acetate. Examples of gonadotrophin releasing hormone analogs are leuprolide acetate (agonist) and cetrorelix (antagonist). An example of an antiestrogen is 7 α -(9-(4,4,5,5,5-pentafluoropentylsulfinyl)nonyl)estra-1,3,5(10)-triene-3,17 β -diol. Examples of other anabolic steroids are testosterone, oxandrolone, nandrolone and fluoxymesterone. However, any progestin, analog of gonadotrophin releasing hormone, antiestrogen or other anabolic steroid may be used in conjunction with the present steroids.

Of course, the 17 β -ester or ether compounds may be made using known esterification or etherification reactions, whereas the 3-oxime or -methoxime compounds may be prepared from the 3-keto compound using conventional reactions.

Experimental Details for the Synthesis of 7 α ,11 β -dimethyl-17 β -hydroxyestr-4-en-3-one (7 α ,11 β -dimethyl-19-nortestosterone)

The preferred method of synthesis of 7 α ,11 β -dimethyl-19-nortestosterone is outlined in Chart A. The commercially available starting material adrenosterone (A-1) was smoothly transformed into the $\Delta^{4,6}$ -dienone compound A-2 upon treatment with acidic 2,3-dichloro-5,6-dicyanoquinone (DDQ). Conjugate methylation of A-2 gave the desired 7 α -methyl compound A-3. Treatment of A-3 with DDQ in the absence of acid provided the $\Delta^{1,4}$ compound A-4. Standard ketalization gave the 17-ketal A-5, which was reduced to the 11 β -alcohol A-6 by treatment with lithium tri-*t*-butoxyaluminum hydride. Ring A aromatization proceeded smoothly upon treatment with diphenyl lithium to give the phenolic compound A-7. Methylation under standard conditions (MeI/K₂CO₃) gave the 3-methoxy compound A-8. In the ¹H NMR spectrum, the appearance of the aromatic protons and disappearance of the 19-methyl protons together with the observation of a sharp singlet at 3.78 ppm for the 3-methoxy group clearly indicated that the product was the desired one. Oxidation of A-8 with pyridinium chlorochromate (PCC) provided 11-ketone A-9. The 11-ketone A-9 was treated with trimethylsilyl methylmagnesium chloride to afford the 11-carbinol A-10, which was hydrolyzed to the 11-methylene compound A-11 in excellent yield. Catalytic hydrogenation of A-11 with rhodium as catalyst gave 11 β -methyl compound A-12 as the sole product. After reduction with NaBH₄, the 17-alcohol A-13 was subjected to Birch reduction. The resulting dienol ether was hydrolyzed by acid treatment to afford 7 α ,11 β -dimethyl-19-nortestosterone. Experimental details are given in the fol-

lowing paragraphs, with the following general procedures being used for all examples.

Melting points were determined on a Thomas Kofler Micro Hot Stage melting point apparatus and are corrected. Electron impact mass spectra were recorded at 70 eV, proton magnetic resonance (^1H NMR) spectra were obtained at 100 MHz or 60 MHz with tetramethylsilane (TMS) as an internal standard and infrared (IR) spectra were recorded by means of a Perkin-Elmer 467 Grating Infrared Spectrophotometer. Ultraviolet (UV) data were obtained by a Cary 14 recording spectrophotometer. Gas-liquid chromatographic (GLC) analyses were performed using a 1.8 m column of 3.8% OV-17 on Chromosorb W AWS or a 1.8 m column of OV-17 (1%)/QF-1 (1%) on Varaport 30, column oven at 250 ° C., and helium carrier at 23–27 mL/min. A Waters 660 Solvent Programmer with 6000A Pumps, U6K Injector, and a Schoeffel GM 770/SF 770 Detector system were used for high-pressure liquid chromatography (HPLC). Analytical thin layer chromatography (TLC) was routinely used to monitor reactions with EM Reagent Silica Gel 60F-254 precoated TLC plates (0.25 mm thickness). Purifications on preparative plates were achieved on Analtech, Inc., Uniplate precoated thin layer chromatographic plates (1.0 mm thickness). ICN Pharmaceuticals prepared dry column silica gel was used for column chromatographic purifications as were EM pre-packed silica gel columns. The mention of specific instruments, instrument settings, and chromatographic media are for the purposes of example and are not intended to be limiting.

Androsta-4,6-diene-3,11,17-trione (A-2)

Adrenosterone (androst-4-ene-3,11,17-trione, A-1, 50 g, 166.7 mmol) was dissolved in dioxane (1200 mL, dry), which had been saturated with HCl gas at 10 ° C. under argon, and a chilled solution of 2,3-dichloro-5,6-dicyanoquinone (DDQ, 50 g, 220 mmol) in hydrogen chloride saturated dioxane (450 mL) was added slowly to the stirred solution. Solid dihydro-DDQ rapidly separated from the solution. After 1.5 h, the mixture was filtered through a sintered glass funnel, most of the dioxane was evaporated under reduced pressure and the residue was chromatographed over silica gel (1000 g) using chloroform as the eluting solvent. The light-yellowish material from evaporation of the eluate was 48.7 g of the dienone compound A-2: mp 237° C.; UV (MeOH) λ_{max} 278 nm (ϵ 24,600); IR (CHCl_3) 1745 (17-C=O), 1705 (11-C=O) and 1650 (3conjugated C=O) cm^{-1} ; ^1H NMR (CDCl_3) 80.92 (s, 3, 18- CH_3), 1.32 (s, 3, 19- CH_3), 5.63 (s, 1, 4-H) and 6.13 (s, 2, 6- and 7-H); m/z 298 (M^+).

7 α -Methylandrosta-4-ene-3,11,17-trione (A-3)

Dimethylsulfide/cuprous bromide complex (389.0 g, 1.89 mol) was suspended in anhydrous ether (1500 mL) containing dimethylsulfide (175 mL) under an argon atmosphere at 10° C. Methylolithium in ether (1.7 mol) was added dropwise until the last trace of yellow precipitate just dissolved. A solution of the diene A-2 (57.0 g, 191 mmol) in dry tetrahydrofuran (THF, 1250 mL) was added dropwise to the stirred solution at 10° C. After addition was completed, the reaction mixture was stirred at room temperature for 1 h and poured into an ice-cold saturated ammonium chloride solution (2000 mL). The product was extracted with ethyl acetate (4x500 mL). The combined extracts were washed with water (2x500 mL), dried over sodium sulfate, and evaporated to yield 79.9 g of crude Δ^5 -product. Without purification, the crude product was dissolved in methanol

(1000 mL) and was treated with 10% hydrochloric acid (100 mL). After the mixture was stirred at room temperature for 2.5 h, TLC indicated an essentially complete reaction. The mixture was poured into 5% (w/w) aqueous sodium bicarbonate solution (1000 mL) and extracted with ethyl acetate (4x500 mL). The combined extracts were washed with water (2x500 mL), dried over magnesium sulfate and concentrated to yield 66.4 g of crude product. Purification through modified column chromatography (1000 g of silica gel, chloroform) removed most of the color, and the compound was recrystallized from acetone to yield a combined total of 21.2 g (36% yield) of A-3 of ~95% purity by GLC: mp 235–237° C.; UV (MeOH) λ_{max} 238 nm (ϵ 12,560); IR (CHCl_3) 1740 (17-C=O), 1708 (11-C=O) and 1665 (3-enone) cm^{-1} ; ^1H NMR (CDCl_3) 85.71 (s, 1, 4-H), 1.40 (s, 3, 19- CH_3), 0.90 (d, 3, J=7 Hz, 7 α - CH_3), 0.84 (s, 3, 18- CH_3); m/z 314 (M^+).

7 α -Methylandrosta-1,4-diene-3,11,17-trione (A-4)

To a solution of 7 α -methyladrenosterone A-3, (20.7 g, 70.2 mmol) in 800 mL of freshly distilled benzene was added 20 g (78 mmol) of DDQ in one portion. The reddish solution was stirred under N_2 and refluxed for 20 h. Upon cooling, the dihydro-DDQ was filtered and washed with 150 mL of benzene. The filtrate and washings were combined and concentrated to a dark gummy foam which was chromatographed on a dry column of silica gel (1.2 kg), employing acetone-chloroform (1:19) as the solvent system. The desired fractions were combined and concentrated to afford 10.0 g (49% of theory) of the final product (A-4): mp 257–259° C.; UV (MeOH) λ_{max} 238 nm (ϵ 13,500); IR (CHCl_3) 1742 (17-C=O), 1710 (11-C=O), 1662 (3-C=O) cm^{-1} ; ^1H NMR (CDCl_3) 87.6 (d, 1, J=10 Hz, 1-H), 6.1 (dd, 1, J=10, 1 Hz, 2-H), 6.05 (br s, 1, 4-H), 1.45 (s, 3, 19- CH_3), 0.9 (s, 3, 18- CH_3), 0.85 (d, 3, J=5 Hz, 7 α - CH_3); m/z 312 (M^+).

17,17-Ethylenedioxy-7 α -methylandrosta-1,4-dione-3,11-dione (A-5)

Into a 500-mL round bottom flask fitted with a Dean-Stark trap and condenser were added 2.8 g (9.0 mmol) of 7 α -methyl- Δ^1 -adrenosterone (A-4) in 300 mL of dry toluene, 25 mL of ethylene glycol and 250 mg of p-toluenesulfonic acid monohydrate. The mixture was refluxed for 3 h and toluene was removed occasionally from the Dean-Stark trap. The reaction mixture was cooled to room temperature and diluted with water. The product was extracted with ether and chloroform. The combined extracts were washed with dilute NaHCO_3 (5% w/w) solution, dried over Na_2SO_4 (anhydrous) and concentrated to give 3.0 g of the crude reaction product, which was purified by dry column chromatography to afford 2.3 g (72% of theory) of the desired ketal A-5: mp 210–213° C.; UV (MeOH) λ_{max} 238 nm (ϵ 13,100); IR (CHCl_3) 1705 (11-C=O), 1662 (3-C=O) cm^{-1} ; ^1H NMR (CDCl_3) 87.7 (d, 1, J=10 Hz, 1-H), 6.15 (dd, 1, J=10, 1 Hz, 2-H), 6.0 (br s, 1, 4-H), 3.8 (s, 4, 17-ketal), 1.45 (s, 3, 19- CH_3), 0.8 (s, 3, 18- CH_3), 0.78 (d, 3, J=6 Hz, 7 α - CH_3); m/z 356 (M^+).

17,17-Ethylenedioxy-11 β -hydroxy-7 α -methylandrosta-1,4-dien-3-one (A-6)

Lithium tri-*t*-butoxyaluminum hydride (4.5 g, 17.2 mmol) was dissolved in 30 mL of freshly distilled tetrahydrofuran (THF). To this hydride solution at 0° C. was added a solution of A-5 (2.3 g, 6.9 mmol) in 25 mL of THF under N_2 over a period of 1 h. The clear yellowish solution was stirred at

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0° C. for 3 h. At this stage, TLC indicated only 1/3 of the starting material reacted. After the mixture was allowed to stir overnight, 2 mL of 5% (w/w) NaOH solution was added at 0° C. The cloudy mixture was stirred for an additional hour and the product was extracted with chloroform and washed with NaHCO₃. Removal of solvent gave 2.2 g of the crude reaction product which was purified by dry column chromatography (silica gel, 5% acetone-chloroform) to give 1.8 g (78% of theory) of the 11-OH compound A-6: mp 242–244° C., UV (MeOH) λ_{max} 241 nm (ϵ 14,000); IR (CHCl₃), 1660 (3-C=O) cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 7.1 (d, 1, J=10 Hz, 1-H), 6.1 (dd, 1, J=10, 2 Hz, 2-H), 5.9 (br s, 1, 4-H), 4.5 (br s, 1, 11 α -H), 3.8 (s, 4, 17-ketal), 1.4 (s, 3, 19-Me), 1.1 (s, 3, 18-Me), 0.75 (d, 3, J=6 Hz, 7 α -Me).

17,17-Ethylenedioxy-7 α -methylestra-1,3,5(10)-triene-3,11 β -diol (A-7)

Into a flame dried 250-mL three neck round bottom flask, fitted with condenser and addition funnel, were placed 2.5 g of biphenyl, 16 mL of diphenylmethane and 80 mL of freshly distilled tetrahydrofuran. The mixture was heated to reflux and ca. 0.5 g (71 mg-atom) of lithium wire was added in portions. Within 10 min, the characteristic dark blue-green color of the radical adduct appeared. The dark blue solution was refluxed with vigorous stirring for 30 min followed by dropwise addition over a period of 30 min of a solution of A-6 (1.85 g, 15.35 mmol) in 25 mL of tetrahydrofuran. The mixture was stirred at reflux for 15 min, then cooled to 0° C. and carefully decomposed with methanol and water. The solvent was removed in vacuo. The residue was taken up in ethyl acetate and chloroform and washed with 5% (w/w) NaHCO₃ solution. Evaporation of solvent afforded 4.5 g of the crude reaction product, which was purified by dry column chromatography (silica gel, 15% acetone-chloroform) to give 1.5 g (82% of theory) of the desired phenolic compound (A-7; mp 106–108° C.; UV (MeOH) λ_{max} 280 (ϵ 2100), 224 nm (6500); ¹H-NMR (CDCl₃) δ 7.05 (br d, 1, J=8 Hz, 1-H), 6.5 (br d, 1, J=8 Hz, 2-H), 6.45 (br s, 1, 4-H), 4.7 (br s, 1, 11-H), 3.8 (br s, 4, 17-ketal), 1.1 (s, 3, 18-Me), 0.80 (d, 3, J=6 Hz, 7 α -CH₃); m/z 344 (M⁺).

17,17-Ethylenedioxy-3-methoxy-11 β -hydroxy-7 α -methylestra-1,3,5(10)-triene (A-8)

Into a 50-mL round bottom flask fitted with a condenser were added the phenolic compound 7 (1.5 g, 14.4 mmol) in 25 mL of methanol and 5.0 g of potassium carbonate. Under vigorous stirring, methyl iodide (6.0 mL) was added dropwise over a period of 30 min. The mixture was refluxed under argon for 1.5 h. TLC indicated the reaction was complete. The solvent was removed under reduced pressure. After dilution with water, the product was extracted with ethyl acetate (3 $\times$) and dried over Na₂SO₄. Evaporation of the solvent gave 1.4 g (90% of theory) of the desired 3-methoxy compound A-8. The appearance of a sharp singlet around 3.8 ppm in the ¹H NMR spectrum is indicative of the correct product.

3-Methoxy-17,17-Ethylenedioxy-7 α -methylestra-1,3,5(10)-triene-11-one (A-9)

Pyridinium chlorochromate (2.5 g, 11.6 mmol) was suspended in 25 mL of freshly distilled methylene chloride. A solution of the 11-hydroxy compound A-8 (1.4 g, 3.91 mmol) in 20 mL of CH₂Cl₂ was added slowly. The mixture was stirred at room temperature for 3 h. The mixture was poured into 100 mL of diethyl ether. The remaining black

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residue in the flask was rinsed with three 50 mL portions of ether. The ethereal solution and washings were combined dried over Na₂SO₄ and concentrated to give 1.5 g of the crude reaction product which was further purified by dry column chromatography (silica gel, 5% acetone-chloroform) to afford 1.1 g (79% of theory) of the desired 11-keto compound A-9; mp 72–74° C.; IR (CHCl₃); 1705 (11=O), cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 3.76 (s, 3, 3-OCH₃), 3.88 (br d, 4, 17-ketal), 0.90 (d, 3, J=6 Hz, 7 α -CH₃), 0.88 (s, 3, 18-CH₃); m/z 356 (M⁺).

3-Methoxy-7 α -methyl-11-methyleneestra-1,3,5(10)-triene-17-one (A-11)

A solution of 17 mL of chloromethyltrimethylsilane in 20 mL of dry diethyl ether was added dropwise to a suspension of magnesium turnings (1.6 g) in 15 mL of dry ether over about 1 h, keeping the reaction mixture just at reflux temperature without external heating. A solution of the 11-keto compound A-9 (1.2 g, 3.40 mmol) in 30 mL of dry diethyl ether was added slowly, and the reaction mixture was refluxed for 3 h. After cooling to room temperature, the mixture was poured into ice cold NH₄Cl solution (15% w/w). The product was extracted with ethyl acetate and chloroform. The combined extracts were washed with water, dried over Na₂SO₄ and concentrated to dryness. Without purification, the crude carbinol A-10 obtained was dissolved in 30 mL of acetone and treated with 10 mL of hydrochloric acid solution (10% w/w). The mixture was stirred at room temperature for 18 h. The product was extracted with ethyl acetate and ether. The combined extracts were washed with NaHCO₃ (5% w/w) solution, dried with Na₂SO₄ and concentrated to give 1.0 g, (95% of theory) of the 11-methylene compound A-11: mp 144–146° C.; IR (CHCl₃), 1740 (17-C=O), cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 7.1 (br d, 1, J=10 Hz, 1-H), 6.65 (dd, 1, J=10, 1 Hz, 2-H), 6.5 (s, 1, 4-H), 4.9 (s, 2, 11-CH₂), 3.75 (s, 3, 3-OCH₃), 0.89 (s, 3, 18-CH₃), 0.84 (d, 3, J=6 Hz, 7 α -CH₃); m/z 310 (*).

3-Methoxy-7 α ,11 β -dimethylestra-1,3,5(10)-triene-17-one (A-12)

The 11-methylene compound A-11 (1.0 g, 3.22 mmol) was dissolved in 75 mL of dry ethyl acetate and was treated with 1.0 g of 5% rhodium-on-alumina catalyst. The mixture was stirred under one atmospheric pressure of hydrogen at room temperature for 18 h. The progress of the reaction was monitored by GLC using a 1.8 m, 3.8% OV-17 column. The catalyst was filtered off and the filtrate and washings were concentrated to give 1.00 g of the crude reaction product which was purified by dry column chromatography (silica gel, 5% acetone-chloroform) to afford 0.88 g (87% of theory) of the desired 11 β -methyl compound A-12: mp 114–115° C.; IR (CHCl₃), 1740 (17-C=O), cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 7.0 (br d, 1, J=10 Hz, 1-H), 6.6 (dd, 1, J=10, 2 Hz, 2-H), 6.5 (s, 1, 4-H), 0.95 (d, 3, J=4 Hz, 11 β -CH₃), 0.92 (s, 3, 18-CH₃), 0.90 (d, 3, J=6 Hz, 7 α -CH₃); m/z 312 (M⁺).

3-Methoxy-17 β -hydroxy-7 α ,11 β -dimethylestra-1,3,5(10)-triene (A-13)

The 17-ketone A-12 (0.80 g, 2.56 mmol) in 50 mL of ethanol was treated with 0.6 g (18.2 mmol) of sodium borohydride at 0° C. The reaction was complete within 20 min, as indicated by TLC. Ethanol was removed under reduced pressure and the product was extracted with ethyl acetate and chloroform. The combined extracts were dried over sodium sulfate and concentrated to give 0.75 g (93% of theory) of white foam A-13: mp 130–131° C.; UV (MeOH)

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λ_{max} 278 (ϵ 1700), 288 (1510), 222 nm (6000); ^1H NMR (CDCl_3) δ 7.0 (d, 1, $J=10$ Hz, 1-H), 6.05 (dd, 1, $J=10$, 2 Hz, 2-H), 6.5 (s, 1, 4-H), 3.6 (m, 1, 17-H), 0.9 (s, 3, 18- CH_3), 0.82 (d, 3 $J=5$ Hz, 11 β - CH_3), 0.78 (d, 3, $J=6$ Hz, 7 α - CH_3); m/z 314 (M^+).

7 α ,11 β -dimethyl-19-nortestosterone (A-14, RTI-1176-012)

Liquid ammonia (150 mL) was condensed in a 500-mL round bottom flask equipped with a dry-ice-acetone condenser, dropping funnel and nitrogen inlet. To the vigorously stirred ammonia solution was added ca. 1.2 g (171 mg-atm) of lithium wire. The dark blue liquid ammonia and lithium complex solution was stirred at -78°C . for an additional hour. Steroid A-13 (0.75 g, 2.39 mmol) in 20 mL of freshly distilled tetrahydrofuran and 20 mL of *t*-butyl alcohol was added dropwise over a period of 20 min. The mixture was stirred at -78°C . for 3 h. A dark blue color persisted throughout the reaction period. Methanol was added cautiously until the dark blue color disappeared. The excess ammonia was evaporated under a stream of nitrogen. The white residue was dissolved in water and the product was extracted from the aqueous phase with ethyl acetate and chloroform. The combined extracts were washed with water, dried over sodium sulfate and evaporated to give 0.72 g of the enol ether, which was dissolved in 50 mL of methanol and treated with 15 mL of 10% (w/w) hydrochloric acid solution. The mixture was warmed to 80°C . for 4 h. TLC showed a clean UV-quenching spot with lower R_f value than for starting material. The reaction mixture was poured over ice cold 5% (w/w) sodium bicarbonate solution and the product was taken up with ethyl acetate. The extracts were washed with water, dried over sodium sulfate and evaporated to give 0.70 g of the crude reaction product. Dry column chromatography and preparative TLC purification employing 5% acetone-chloroform as solvent system afforded 0.4 g (55% of theory) of final product A-14 (7 α ,11 β -dimethyl-19-nortestosterone): mp $149\text{--}151^\circ\text{C}$.; UV (MeOH) λ_{max} 242 nm (ϵ 11,700); IR (CHCl_3), 3450 (17-OH), 1665 (3-enone) cm^{-1} ; ^1H NMR (CDCl_3), (100 MHz) δ 5.86 (br s, 1, 4-H), 3.63 (br t, 1, $J=7$ Hz, 17 α -H), 1.08 (d, 3, $J=7$ Hz, 11 β - CH_3), 0.89 (s, 3, 18- CH_3), 0.7 (d, 3, $J=7$ Hz, 7 α - CH_3); m/z 302 (M^+), high resolution MS: Found, 302.2243; calcd for $\text{C}_{20}\text{H}_{30}\text{O}_2$, m/z 302.2247.

EXAMPLE 2

Synthesis of 17 β -Hydroxy-7 α -methyl-11-methyleneestr-4-en-3-one (7 α -methyl-11-methylene-19-nortestosterone)

3-Methoxy-7 α -methyl-11-methyleneestr-1,3,5(10)-trien-17-one (A-11) was subjected to sodium borohydride reduction of the 17-ketone function, Birch reduction with lithium/ NH_3 (1), and acid hydrolysis and rearrangement to the title compound. Experimental details are as follows:

The 11-methylene ketone A-11 (100 mg, 0.28 mmol) in 8 mL of ethanol was treated with sodium borohydride (100 mg, 3.0 mmol) at 0°C . The reaction was complete in 20 min as indicated by TLC. Ethanol was removed under reduced pressure. The residue was diluted with water and the product was extracted from the aqueous phase with ethyl acetate and chloroform. The combined extracts were dried over sodium sulfate (anhydrous) and concentrated to give 105 mg of 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -methyl-11-methylene-3-methoxyestra-1,3,5(10)-triene (^1H NMR broad triplet at 3.80 ppm), used without further purification.

Liquid ammonia (20 mL) was condensed in a 25-mL round bottom flask equipped with a dry-ice-acetone condenser, dropping funnel and nitrogen inlet. To the vig-

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orously stirred ammonia solution was added 0.3 g (43 mg-atom) of lithium wire. The dark blue complex solution was stirred at -78°C . for an additional hour. The above steroid (105 mg, 0.29 mmol) in 4 mL of freshly distilled THF and 3 mL of *t*-butyl alcohol was added dropwise and the mixture was stirred for an additional 3 h. A dark blue color persisted throughout the reaction period. Methanol was added cautiously until the dark blue color disappeared. The excess ammonia was evaporated under a slow stream of nitrogen. The white residue was dissolved in water and the product was extracted from the aqueous phase with ethyl acetate. The combined extracts were washed with water, dried over sodium sulfate and evaporated to give 100 mg of the crude reaction product. Without purification, the residue was dissolved in 15 mL of methanol and treated with 3 mL of 10% (v/v) hydrochloric acid/water. The mixture was heated to reflux for 2.5 h. TLC indicated complete reaction. Methanol was removed under reduced pressure. The light yellow residue was diluted with water and the product was extracted with ethyl acetate and chloroform. The combined extracts were washed with water, dried over sodium sulfate (anhydrous) and concentrated to afford 90 mg of the crude product. Preparative TLC purification (10% acetone in chloroform) afforded 37 mg of 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -methyl-11-methyleneestr-4-en-3-one (7 α -methyl-11-methylene-19-nortestosterone): mp. $138\text{--}139^\circ\text{C}$.; IR (CHCl_3) 3500 (17-OH), 1668 (conjugated 3-ketone), (exocyclic $\text{C}=\text{C}$) 900 cm^{-1} ; ^1H NMR (CDCl_3) δ 5.88 (br s, 1, 4-H), 4.8 (d, 2, 11- CH_2), 3.80 (br t, 1, $J=8$ Hz, 17 α -H), 0.78 (d, 3, $J=7$ Hz, 7 α - CH_3), 0.74 (s, 3, 18- CH_3); m/z 300 (M^+).

EXAMPLE 3

Synthesis of 7 α ,11 β -dimethyl-17 β -heptanoyloxyestr-4-en-3-one (7 α ,11 β -dimethyl-19-nortestosterone enanthate)

7 α ,11 β -dimethyl-17 β -hydroxyestr-4-en-3-one A-14 (200 mg, 0.66 mmol) was dissolved in dry benzene (4 mL) and dry pyridine (1 mL). Under an argon atmosphere, freshly distilled heptanoyl chloride (1 mL) was added to the stirred solution at 0°C . The reaction was complete within 15 min as indicated by TLC. The reaction mixture was poured into water, neutralized with a 5% (w/w) aqueous sodium bicarbonate solution and extracted with ethyl acetate. The combined extracts were washed with water, dried over sodium sulfate (anhydrous) and concentrated to give 450 mg of yellowish oil that was purified by dry column chromatography (silica gel, 50 g, 5% acetone-chloroform) to afford 280 mg of the desired enanthate derivative: IR (CHCl_3) 1730 (enanthate $\text{C}=\text{O}$), 1668 (3-conjugated $\text{C}=\text{O}$); ^1H NMR (CDCl_3 , 100 MHz) δ 5.85 (br s, 1, 4-H), 4.60 (br t, 1, 17 α -H), 1.06 (d, 3, $J=7$ Hz, 11 β - CH_3), 0.90 (s, 3, 18- CH_3), 0.77 (d, 3, $J=7$ Hz, 7 α - CH_3); m/z 414 (M^+).

EXAMPLE 4

In order to demonstrate the importance of the 7 α ,11 β -disubstitution of the present androgenic steroid compounds, a receptor binding study was conducted by evaluating relative binding (DHT=100) to androgen receptor from rat ventral prostate to obtain Androgen RBA.

Androgenic Activity was also evaluated using subcutaneous administration to immature castrated male rats (Testosterone=100).

Additionally, Estrogen RBA was determined by relative binding (Estradiol=100) to estrogen receptor from immature female rat uterus, while Estrogenic Activity was determined by subcutaneous administration to immature female rats (Estradiol=100).

The following compounds, defined by substituents on 19-nortestosterone, were tested.

Compound#	7α	11β	Other
1	CH ₃	CH ₃	
2	CH ₃	H	
3	CH ₃	CH ₃	5α-dihydro
4	CH ₃	CH ₂ =	
5	CH ₃	H	Δ-14
6	CH ₃	CH ₃	Enanthate ester
7	H	H	7β-methyl

The results obtained are summarized in Tables 1 and 2 hereinbelow.

The importance of the 7α-methyl isomer and of its stereoselective synthesis is emphasized by the finding that 7α-methyl-19-nortestosterone has a relative binding activity (RBA) for the androgen receptor from rat of 162 compared to dihydrotestosterone (=100) versus an RBA value of 22 for 7β-methyl-19-nortestosterone. The further importance of the concomitant 11β-methyl group is shown by the androgenic RBA of 194 for 7α,11β-dimethyl-19-nortestosterone and the marked increase in acute androgenic activity of this compound as compared with 7α-methyl-19-nortestosterone (see Table 1) and of the greater potency and longer duration of action of the enanthate ester of 7α,11β-dimethyl-19-nortestosterone as compared with testosterone enanthate (See Table 2).

TABLE 1

Receptor Binding and Single Dose Activity									
Compound	Substituents on 19-nortestosterone [#]			Androgen RBA*	Androgenic Activity ^{##}				
	7α	11β	Other		Seminal Vesicles	Ventral Prostate	Levator Ani	Estrogen RBA**	Estrogenic Activity ^{\$}
RTI No.	7α	11β	Other	RBA*	Vesicles	Prostate	Ani	RBA**	Activity ^{\$}
1176-012	CH ₃	CH ₃		194 (n = 4)	1540 (n = 3)	1480 (n = 3)	3800 (n = 3)	0.6 (n = 3)	0.8
1176-013	H	H	7β-methyl	22 (n = 2)					
1176-024	CH ₃	H		162 (n = 4)	790	609	2510		
1471-032	CH ₃	CH ₃	5-alpha-dihydro		377	742			0.7
1471-034	CH ₃	CH ₂ =		176	993	1519-2148			
1471-038	H	CH ₃	delta-14	11	100***	<100***	400***		

[#]Estr-4-en-17β-o1-3-one
^{*}Relative binding (Dihydrotestosterone = 100) to androgen receptor from rat ventral prostate
^{##}Subcutaneous administration to immature castrated male rats (Testosterone = 100)
^{**}Relative binding (Estradio = 100) to estrogen receptor from immature female rat uterus
^{\$}Subcutaneous administration to immature female rats (Estradiol = 100)
^{***}Single dose level study

TABLE 2

Long Term Androgenic Activity in Male Rats (% Change from Control)							
Compound	Substituents on 19-nortestosterone			Week after	Final Body Weight (%) change from control)	Seminal Ves- icle Weight (% change from control)	Ventral Pro- state Weight (% change from control)
	7α	11β	Other				
Testosterone enanthate (0.6 mg)			10-CH ₃ -Enanthate ester	1	0%	452%	409%
				2	6%	318%	339%
				4	-7%	281%	291%
				6	0%	248%	405%
				8	6%	187%	150%
RTI 147-029 (0.3 mg)			Enanthate ester	10	0%	179%	130%
				1	9%	571%	368%
				2	1%	580%	582%
				4	3%	438%	583%
				6	-1%	603%	649%
(0.6 mg)				8	-10%	312%	340%
				10	-2%	426%	562%
				1	15%	968%	628%
				2	6%	1428%	778%
				4	1%	1222%	1145%
				6	0%	1777%	1810%
				8	-16%	1044%	858%
				10	1%	924%	749%

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The compounds of the present invention may be used in any formulation which is suitable for administration by oral, buccal, nasal, intravenous, dermal, subdermal, intramuscular or rectal means. However, the present compounds may be advantageously used in smaller than conventional sldn patches, in formulations for buccal administration or in aerosol form. When used in aerosol form, the compounds of the present invention may be used in compressed air or other gaseous medium suitable for nasal injection in a can or vial having spraying means, such as a nozzle, for releasing the contents. Such containing means and aerosol formulations for nasal administration are known in the art.

The compounds and/or compositions of the present invention when formulated for dermal application may be in the form of a cream, lotion or solution for facile topical application. In preparing the cream, lotion or solution, any conventional and dermatologically acceptable base formulation may be used.

For example, a base formulation may be prepared in accordance with any of U.S. Pat. Nos. 4,126,702; 4,760,096 or 4,849,425, all of which are incorporated herein by reference in the entirety.

The present compounds and/or compositions of the present invention may be used alone or in combination with one or more other pharmacologically active compound as noted above for hormone treatment of a mammal in either human or animal use.

Further, the present compounds and/or compositions of the present invention may also be used alone or in combination with progestins or gonodotrophin-releasing hormone analogs, either agonists or antagonists, in controlling male fertility. In either utility, the amount administered per dosage is generally from about 5% to about 125% of a conventional dosage of a conventional drug. The male may be a human or an animal, such as a cat, dog, pig, cow, sheep or ox.

In accordance with the present invention, while the dosages of the present compounds and/or compositions administered may be less than conventional dosages, the frequency of administration is generally less frequent to the same as for conventional steroids. However, the frequency of administration will depend upon various factors, such as age, weight, type of formulation, and other medication used, for example, under the guidance of a physician.

Having described the present invention, it will now be apparent to those skilled in the art that many changes and modifications may be made to the above-described embodiments without departing from the spirit and the scope of the present invention.

For example, it will be apparent to one skilled in the art that various modifications of the described synthetic route may be made, as long as one introduces the 7 α -substituent prior to introduction of the 11-substituent. Thus, for example, the compound 3-methoxy-7 α -methylestra-1,3,5(10)-trien-17-one or the analogous 17 β -ol or 17-acetate may be made by aromatization of the analogous 7 α -methyltestosterone or 7 α -methyl-19-nortestosterone derivative followed by 3-O-methylation. Oxidation of the benzylic 11-position and protection at C-17 would lead to compound 9 shown in the synthetic scheme (Chart A) above. Alternatively the aromatic compound may be converted by Birch reduction, hydrolysis, treatment with pyridinium perbromide and ketalization to a 3-ketal-5(10),9(11)-diene, which could be epoxidized at the 5(10)-position and further converted to the 11 β -methyl-4-ene-3-one by reaction with an organocopper reagent, acid hydrolysis, double bond reduction and isomerization. It will also be apparent that

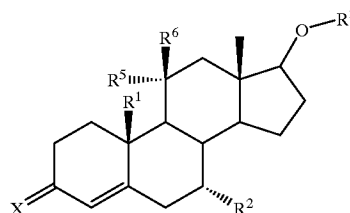
20

various other functions and protecting groups may be used to preserve the desired 17-oxygenated substituent during the reaction sequence. These and other such modifications of the synthesis are explicitly within the scope of the present invention.

What is claimed as new and is desired to be secured by Letters Patent of the United States is:

1. An androgenic steroid compound of the formula (II)

(II)



wherein:

R¹ is H;

R² is an α -substituent which is unsubstituted lower alkyl or fluoro-substituted lower alkyl;

R³ is H, or an acyl group (CO)—R⁴, where R⁴ is C₁₋₁₈ alkyl, alkenyl or alkynyl, or R⁴ is C₄₋₁₈ cycloalkyl or substituted cycloalkyl, or R⁴ is C₆₋₁₈ aryl or substituted aryl or R⁴ is a 5 to 15 membered heterocycle or substituted heterocycle, and wherein R⁴ may optionally be substituted with 1 to 3 heteroatoms or 1 to 5 halogen atoms;

R⁵ is α -H; and

R⁶ is β -unsubstituted or substituted lower alkyl, unsubstituted or substituted alkenyl or unsubstituted or substituted alkynyl, or

R⁵ and R⁶ is =CH₂; and

X is O, (H,OH) or (H,OCOR⁴) where R⁴ is as defined above.

2. The androgenic steroid compound of claim 1, wherein

R¹ is H;

R² is CH₃;

R³ is H, or R³ is (CO)—R⁴, wherein R⁴ is CH₃, C₂H₅, n-C₆H₁₃, (CH₃)₂CH, cyclopentyl-CH₂—CH₂, trans-(4-n-butyl)cyclohexyl, n-C₆H₁₉, (CH₂)₂(CO)(CH₂)₅CH₃, phenyl-CH₂ or 3-pyridyl;

R⁵ is α -H and R⁶ is β -CH₃; and

X is O or (H,OH).

3. The androgenic steroid compound of claim 1, which is selected from the group consisting of 7 α ,11 β -dimethyl-17 β -hydroxyestr-4-en-3-one, 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -methyl-11-methyleneestr-4-en-3-one, 7 α ,11 β -dimethyl-17 β -heptanoyloxyestr-4-en-3-one, 7 α ,11 β -dimethyl-17 β -[(2-cyclopentylethyl)carbonyl]oxy]estr-4-en-3-one and 7 α ,11 β -dimethyl-17 β -(phenylacetyloxy)estr-4-en-3-one.

4. The androgenic steroid compound of claim 1, wherein

R² is α -CH₃;

R³ is H;

R⁵ is α -H;

R⁶ is β -CH₃; and

X is O or (H,OH).

5. A pharmaceutical composition, which comprises

- at least one compound of the formula (I) of claim 1; and
- a pharmaceutically-acceptable carrier.

6. The pharmaceutical composition of claim 5, which further comprises at least one other pharmacologically active compound.

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7. The pharmaceutical composition of claim 6, wherein said other pharmacologically active compound is selected from the group consisting of progestins and GnRH analogs.
8. The pharmaceutical composition of claims 5, 6, or 7 which is in a form suitable for injection.
9. The pharmaceutical composition of claims 5, 6, or 7, which is in a form suitable for oral administration.
10. The pharmaceutical composition of claims 5, 6, or 7, which is in a form suitable for inhalation.
11. The pharmaceutical composition of claims 5, 6, or 7, which is in a form suitable for dermal administration.
12. The pharmaceutical composition of claims 5, 6, or 7, which is in a form suitable for buccal administration.
13. The pharmaceutical composition of claims 5, 6, or 7, which is in form of a skin patch.
14. The pharmaceutical composition of claims 5, 6, or 7, which is in a form suitable for intramuscular administration.
15. A subdermal implant for a mammal, comprising at least one or more compounds of claim 1.
16. A patch for adhesion to a skin surface of a mammal, which comprises at least one or more compounds of claim 1.
17. Containing means, comprising therein at least one or more compounds of claim 1 in aerosol form suitable for inhalation.
18. The containing means of claim 17, which is a metallic or plastic container, comprising spraying means for releasing said aerosol therefrom.
19. A method of effecting androgenic hormonal treatment in a mammal, which comprises administering an effective

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- amount of one or more androgenic steroid compounds of claim 1 to a mammal in need thereof.
20. The method of claim 19, wherein said mammal is a human.
21. The method of claim 19, wherein said mammal is a horse, cow, pig, sheep, ox or dog.
22. A method of controlling male fertility in a mammal, which comprises administering an effective amount of one or more androgenic steroid compounds of claim 1 to a mammal in need thereof.
23. The method of claim 22, wherein said mammal is a human.
24. The method of claim 22, wherein said mammal is a horse, cow, pig, sheep, ox or dog.
25. The method of claim 22, which further comprises administering one or more other reproductively active compounds before, with or after administration of said one or more androgenic steroid compounds.
26. The androgenic steroid compound of claim 1, which is selected from the group consisting of 7 α ,11 β -dimethyl-17 β -hydroxyestr-4-en-3-one, 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -methyl-11-methyleneestr-4-en-3-one, 7 α ,11 β -dimethyl-17 β -heptanoyloxyestr-4-en-3-one, 7 α ,11 β -dimethyl-17 β -[(2-cyclopentylethyl)carbonyl]oxy]estr-4-en-3-one, and 7 α ,11 β -dimethyl-17 β -[(trans-4-[n-butyl]cyclohexyl)carbonyl]oxy]estr-4-en-3-one.

* * * * *

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTION

PATENT NO. : 6,369,047 B2
DATED : April 9, 2002
INVENTOR(S) : C. Edgar Cook et al.

Page 1 of 4

It is certified that error appears in the above-identified patent and that said Letters Patent is hereby corrected as shown below:

Column 1,

Line 23, "in promoting in" should read -- in promoting --.

Column 2,

Line 15, "H is a" should read -- H is α --;

Line 16, "H is a" should read -- H is α --;

Line 20, "or C₈-C₂" should read -- or C₂-C₈ --.

Column 3,

Line 29, "or C₂-C₁₃ alkenyl o" should read -- or C₂-C₁₈ alkenyl or --;

Line 45, "is C₆-C¹⁸" should read -- is C₆-C₁₈ --;

Line 57, "CH₂-C₂" should read -- or CH₂-CH₂ --;

Line 67, "diethyl-" should read -- dimethyl- --.

Column 4,

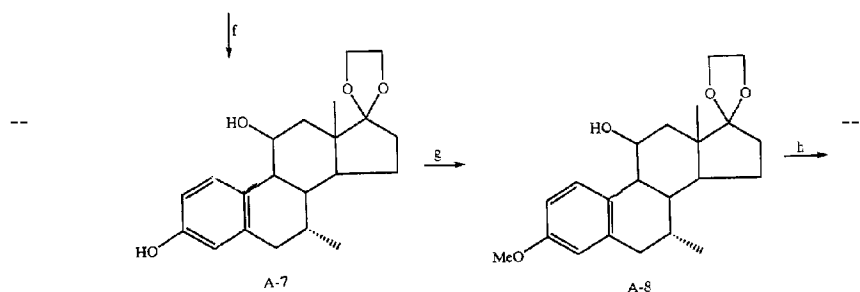
Line 6, "ion-propyl" should read -- iso-propyl --;

Line 61, "lower alkyl lower" should read -- lower alkyl, lower -.

Column 5,

Line 14, "(CO)-C₃H₁₇," should read -- (CO)-C₈H₁₇, --;

Line 62, delete A-7 and A-8 and replace with:



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTION

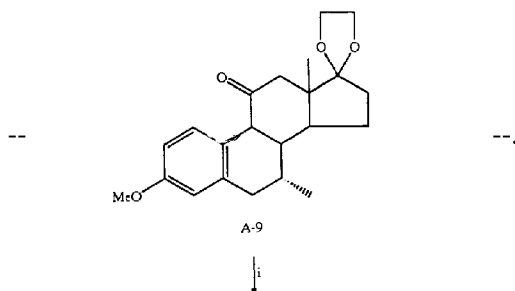
PATENT NO. : 6,369,047 B2
DATED : April 9, 2002
INVENTOR(S) : C. Edgar Cook et al.

Page 2 of 4

It is certified that error appears in the above-identified patent and that said Letters Patent is hereby corrected as shown below:

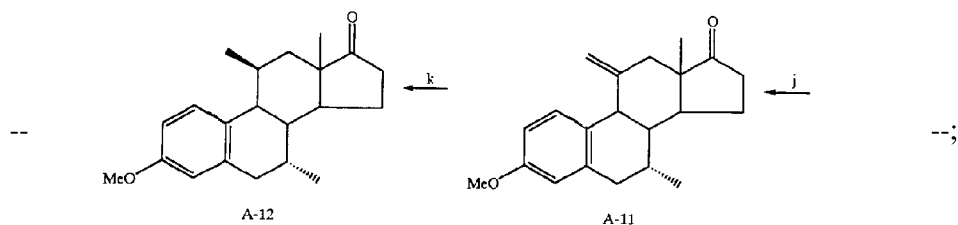
Column 6,

Line 62, delete A-9 and replace with:

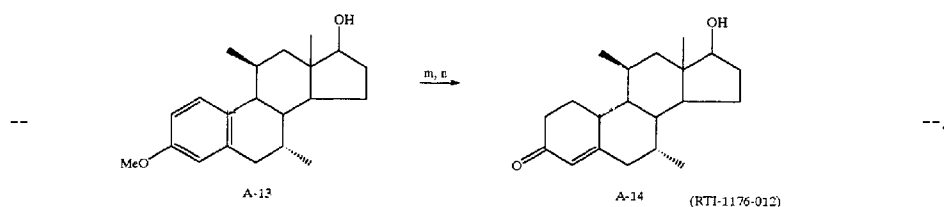


Column 7,

Line 5, delete A-12 and A-11 and replace with



Line 17, delete A-13 and A-14 replace with:



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTION

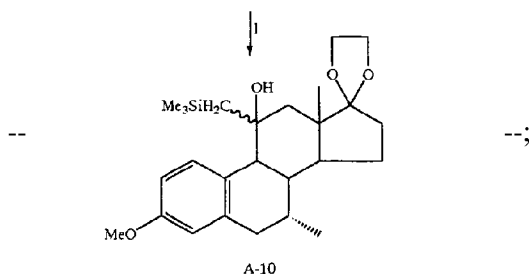
PATENT NO. : 6,369,047 B2
DATED : April 9, 2002
INVENTOR(S) : C. Edgar Cook et al.

Page 3 of 4

It is certified that error appears in the above-identified patent and that said Letters Patent is hereby corrected as shown below:

Column 8,

Line 5, delete A-10 and replace with:



Line 22, "g:MeLK₂CO₃" and -- g:MeIK₂CO₃ --.

Column 9,

Line 14, "MeLi/CuBr/Me₂S" should read -- MeLi/CuBr/Me₂S --;

Line 50, "gonadotophin" should read -- gonadotrophin --.

Column 10,

Line 15, "such progestins," should read -- such as progestins, --.

Column 11,

Line 47, "1650 (3conjugated" should read -- 1650 (3-conjugated --;

Line 49, "(m⁺)" should read -- (M⁺) --.

Column 12,

Line 38, "-dione-" should read -- -diene- --.

Column 13,

Line 2, "staring" should read -- starting --;

Line 36, "(A-7;" should read -- (A-7); --;

Line 46, "7" should read -- A-7 --.

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTION

PATENT NO. : 6,369,047 B2
DATED : April 9, 2002
INVENTOR(S) : C. Edgar Cook et al.

Page 4 of 4

It is certified that error appears in the above-identified patent and that said Letters Patent is hereby corrected as shown below:

Column 14,

Line 8, "(11=0)," should read -- (11-C=0), --;

Line 37, "(+)" should read -- (M⁺) --.

Column 15,

Line 3, "(m 1, 17-H)," should read -- (m,l, 17-H), --;

Line 4, "(d, 3 J=5 Hz," should read -- (d, 3,J=5 Hz, --.

Column 17,

Line 38, "Estradio" should read -- Estradiol --;

Line 58, "RTI 147-029" should read -- RTI 1471-029 --.

Column 18,

Line 11, "nortesterone" should read -- nortestosterone --;

Line 48, "nortesterone" should read -- nortestosterone --;

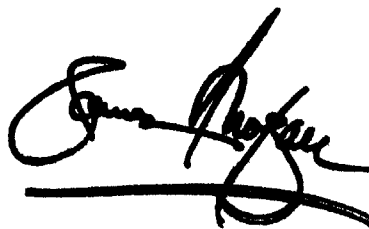
Line 58, "6%" should read -- -6% --.

Column 19,

Line 5, "sldn" should read -- skin --.

Signed and Sealed this

Twenty-fifth Day February, 2003

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James E. Rogan', with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

JAMES E. ROGAN
Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office